

10/31/68

AIRTEL

1 - Mr. Long

To: SAC, Memphis (44-1987)

From: Director, FBI (44-38861)

MURKIN

Bureau is in receipt of a copy of a letter from James Earl Ray addressed to J. B. Stoner, Savannah, Georgia, as provided to you by the Sheriff of Shelby County, Memphis, Tennessee. This letter is thanking Stoner for coming to Memphis and states that Ray's brother will be in touch with Stoner.

In your teletype of 9/30/68, you advised that in the motion filed by Arthur J. Hanes, Ray's attorney, in Shelby County Criminal Court, Memphis, Tennessee, pertaining to Ray's corresponding with his attorney, Judge W. Preston Battle, ruled that written notes exchanged between Ray and his attorney are privileged; however, the Shelby County Sheriff or his designated agent has the authority to peruse these notes to determine if there is any attempt to breach security of the jail. These notes should not be perused for the purpose of ascertaining the full contents of the messages.

In view of the above order of W. Preston Battle, you should not accept any written communication from the sheriff regarding correspondence between Ray and other individuals. If it is not in violation of the court order you may accept information from the sheriff if he volunteers this information and it is on an oral basis only.

REL:gcw
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SEE NOTE PAGE TWO

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ENCLOSURE

MAILED 4
COMM-FBI

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

RE:

Bureau is in receipt of a copy of a letter from James Earl Ray addressed to J. B. Stoner, Savannah, Georgia, provided by the Sheriff of Shelby County, Memphis, Tennessee, our Memphis Office. This letter is thanking Stoner for coming to Memphis and states that Ray's brother will be in touch with Stoner.

Memphis by teletype of 5-30-68, advised that in a motion filed by Arthur J. Hanes, Ray's attorney, in Shelby County Criminal Court, Memphis, Tennessee, pertaining to Ray's corresponding with his attorney, Judge W. Preston Battle, that written notes exchanged between Ray and his attorney are privileged; however, the Shelby County Sheriff or his designated agent has the authority to peruse these notes to determine if there is any attempt to breach security of the trial. These notes should not be perused for the purpose of obtaining the full contents of the messages.

This communication is advising Memphis not to accept written communication from the sheriff regarding Ray's correspondence; however, they may accept information on an oral basis from the sheriff. Memphis also being instructed to insure that the acceptance of this oral information is not in violation of the court order.

Prior information indicates that Ray has been in contact with J. B. Stoner with a view towards engaging him as counsel, although Hanes continues to be Ray's attorney of record.